Eunice

Pratts

Blue Bird

A

NEW HISTORY

OF

BLUE BEARD.

WRITTEN BY

GAFFER BLACK BEARD.

For the Amusement of Little LACK BEARD, and his PRETTY SISTERS.

Adorned with Cuts.

From Sidney's Press,
NEW-HAVEN.
1806

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q

r ſ s t u v w x y z &.

Capital Letters.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T U V

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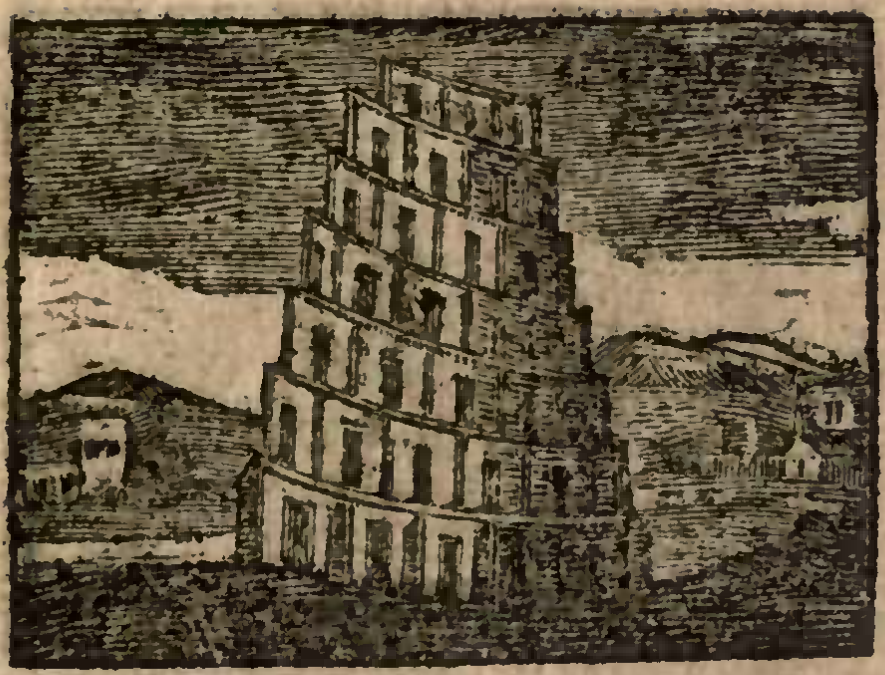
A New History of

BLUE BEARD.

ONCE upon a time there lived, a great way off, an old man who had two daughters, the name of the eldeſt was Fatima, the youngeſt Irene. Irene was a very pretty girl, but Fatima was beauty itſelf; and ſo very good beſides, that every body loved her: you may ſee her introduced to a gentleman, to whom ſhe was going to be married, her father having given his conſent, had not the fame of her beauty reached the ears of a very great man, I ſhould have ſaid tyrant, for he was a very

cruel over-bearing nobleman, and had been married to ſeveral ladies, of whom nobody knew what was become: but as he was very rich, and lived in a grand caſtle, of which I here preſent you with the drawing; he ſome how or other, was never long without a wife. This nobleman, whoſe name was Abomelique, but generally called Blue Beard,



on account of his beard being of that color, being determined to ſee her, under a pretence of buſineſs paid the father of Fatima a viſit. Poor Fatima! ſhe little thought the great Abomelique was come to her father's cottage on her account; but ſo it was, he came attended like a king, (you may ſee him in the picture) the father of Fatima ſtanding at the door to receive him; as ſoon as he

entered the houſe the old man entertained him in the beſt manner he could, and ordered his two daughters to dreſs themſelves in their beſt, and wait upon him; who, being good girls, ſoon did as they were bid; no ſooner did Blue Beard ſee Fatima than he fell violently in love with her. I ſhould not ſay love, for it was that kind of love a wolf has for a pretty innocent lamb; ſo

without any more ado, he told her father the reaſon of his coming, offering to make her his wife; and that himſelf, and his other daughter, ſhould go and live with him at the Caſtle.

The father was quite delighted with the offer, eſpecially as Blue Beard told him he ſhould be the maſter of all his ſlaves, and next himſelf in power. Irene too tho't ſhe ſhould like it vaſtly; "what a fine thing," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "it will be to have fine rooms to walk in when the weather is bad; and gardens to range in when the weather is fine; well, I almoſt wiſh he had fallen in love with me, for I don't think the great Abomelique would be ſo ugly, if it was not for his mon-

ſtrous great Blue Beard; Such was the thought of Irene. As to poor Fatima ſhe fainted away, which frightened Blue Beard, who would have been glad to have found her agreeable to his wiſhes, however with much ado they brought her to herſelf when Blue Beard left her, promiſing to come the next day, and fetch her in ſtate to the Caſtle: after he was gone nothing ran in the father's head but how he ſhould enjoy himſelf at the Caſtle. As to Irene, ſhe could not help pitying her ſiſter, who was in a ſad taking.

Fatima had a real love for Selim, to whom her father had promiſed his conſent in marriage. You ſee promiſes with ſome, like pye-cruſt, is made to be broken. Ah! ſilly

old man, you little think about the evil that hangs over your daughter's head. As Fatima knew she should be forced to go with Blue Beard, she wrote immediately to Selim. Now only think what a fine thing it is to be a scholar, for if Fatima could not have wrote to her lover, nobody else would have done it for her, and what would have been the consequence you will find by and by; so above all things learn to read your book, that your daddy and mammy may learn you to write too; well as soon as she had finished her letter, she gave it to a trusty messenger, who set off full speed and soon arrived at Selim's house. I must now return to Blue Beard, who could not get a wink of sleep all

night, ſo much did he think of his intended bride: ſo, no ſooner had the ſun gilded the mountain's tops than he was up, and the proceſſion was ordered to move towards the village; you can think what a fine ſight it was, firſt came two trumpeters, then two kettle-drums, then two French horns, then two men with fine ſilken flags, then ſome of his black ſlaves armed with bows

and arrows; next came the great Abomelique himſelf, riding on an elephant, under a fine ſilken canopy; next followed another elephant richly dreſſed, with a fine ſeat on his back, with a ſilken canopy over it, for Fatima and her ſiſter; a fine Arabian horſe followed, led by a black ſlave, for her father; a band of muſic following; then his ſlaves armed with bows and arrows, cloſed the proceſſion. Blue Beard brought ſome fine clothes along with him for Fatima and her ſiſter, which the father inſiſted upon her wearing. It was in vain for her to tell him ſhe could not be happy, as her heart was given to Selim; he knew that Blue Beard was very rich, and like many others, he thought happineſs

consisted in wealth; so, says he, have him you must, and have him you shall: Abomelique, at the same time, took all manner of pains to please her; for, beside the fine clothes, he brought her jewels and diamonds in profusion, and promised she should want for nothing when she got to the castle.

After being dressed in a very grand manner she was put or rather forced into her seat on the elephant's back along with her sister Irene; the ladies round about, who came to the sight, could scarce keep from envying her, forgetting that very fine clothes may hide a very heavy heart, as it did now. No sooner was the company seated than the music began to play, and off the great Abom-

elique marched in triumph with his prize. Her lover Selim no sooner received her letter, than knowing no time was to be lost, went directly to his brother, who commanded a troop, who promised to assist him to the utmost; so it was agreed to muster their men, and to set off immediately for the father, and bring Fatima away: or, if Blue Beard had already got her, to force her from him, who by now had arrived at his Castle. Sure nothing could equal the rejoicings made to welcome her.—Blue Beard conducted her to a fine seat in a magnificent garden, where refreshments were placed and some of the females were ordered to dance to entertain her; but for all this she was still melancholy; as to her fa-

ther he was as merry as a grig, pulling about the women, and driving about the men; and Irene would have been merry could ſhe have ſeen her ſiſter ſo. Blue Beard having a mind to leave her a little to herſelf, pretended he had buſineſs of the utmoſt importance to tranſact, told her he muſt leave her till the evening, giving her at the ſame time the keys of all the apartments of the Caſtle, telling her, as ſhe was miſtreſs of the place to go freely into any of them, except that room, the door of which was in the Blue Chamber; and of which this key, ſet with diamonds, opens the lock; upon your life don't go into that chamber, giving Fatima the keys; and then with a look that frightened her ſadly, left her; as

ſoon as he was gone, Irene cried, now is not that kind of him to give you the keys to go where you pleaſe? No, my dear ſiſter, ſaid Fatima, I had much rather he had kept them; you find I am forbid going into one room, did not you hear him ſay, my life depended on it.

I don't think any thing of that, ſaid Irene, I long to ſee that chamber in particular; come don't mope ſo, if you had not ſeen Selim firſt, you might be very happy, for ſetting aſide his beard I don't think Abomelique ſo very ugly; now as he won't be at home till evening, pray do let us go over the Caſtle, I long to have a rummage. It was a long while before Irene could perſuade her ſiſter to go; however ſhe agreed

at length, and away they went; it would tire your patience if I told you all the fine things they ſaw, in one of the rooms there was a fine guitar hanging up, which Fatima took down, and began playing upon to divert her melancholy:

Irene would not let her ſiſter play upon it long, for ſhe was impatient to ſee the reſt of the chambers, when at length they arrived at the blue one, this was the grandeſt of all, it was lined with looking glaſſes, ornamented with fine blue enamelled frames; here you might ſee yourſelf from head to foot; the mantle piece was ſupported by pillars of the fineſt blue china; and though it was called the Blue Chamber, it might as well have

been called the Golden one as the floor was lined with it, two glaſs chandeliers hung from the ceiling by chains of gold. In ſhort, nothing was wanting to make this the fineſt room that ever was ſeen: in the middle of this chamber ſtood the door of that they were forbid to enter: well, ſiſter Fatima, ſays Irene, I am quite delighted with this place, I ſhould like to ſee the next chamber vaſtly, I dare ſay it muſt be finer ſtill; come, what ſay you to it, ſhall we look at it, there is nobody here to ſee us, and you know we need not tell of ourſelves.

Dear ſiſter, ſaid Fatima, pray don't aſk me, I dread the thought of it, let us be ſatisfied with what we have ſeen, and return; indeed

I begin to be tired with the ramble we have had ; well, my dear ſiſter, ſaid Irene, we may not have ſuch another opportunity a great while, if you wont go in, let us juſt open the door, and only look in, ſure there can be no great harm in that. I could like to pleaſe you, ſays Fatima, but I am ſadly afraid : Pho ! cried Irene, don't be afraid before you are hurt ; come, fear nothing. Fatima, to pleaſe her, took the key all ſparkling with diamonds, and put it to the lock, when the door flew open in an inſtant, and diſcovered ſuch a diſmal ſcene, that Fatima inſtantly fainted away, the walls were lined with the ſkeletons, and the floor was ſtrewed with the limbs of the dead wives the cruel

Blue Beard had already murdered, which were ſwimming in their blood, into which, when Fatima fainted, ſhe dropt the key. At one end of this diſmal room ſtood the figure of death holding a dart, and over him was wrote, in characters of blood, *The puniſhment of curioſity.* Mercy on me! ſaid Fatima, as ſoon as ſhe recovered, what will become of me. Abomelique will ſurely find me out, and no doubt ſerve me as he has done the poor creatures we have juſt ſeen.

Come, deer ſiſter, ſaid Irene, let us get away, I am very ſorry I perſuaded you to open the door;—Where is the key gone, ſays Fatima, 'tis not in the door? Perhaps it is dropt, ſays Irene: and ſo it

was ſure enough, and what was worſe, into the blood: ſhe took it up, locked the door, and wiped the blood from off her hands, but in ſpite of all they could do, they could not wipe it from the key. Now you muſt know this key was the gift of a fairy to Blue Beard; and when poor Fatima found ſhe could not clean it, ſhe cried bitterly, and Irene could not help crying too. You know, my dear, 'tis a ſaying, one trouble ſeldom comes alone; and that was the caſe now; for while they were thinking what they ſhould do, a black ſlave entered to tell them Abomelique was returned, and expected them in the grand ſaloon. This was terrible news for Fatima, who

gave herſelf up for loſt; however, go ſhe muſt.

Now as they were going, Fatima ſays to Irene, my dear ſiſter, yeſterday I wrote to Selim, and as I make no doubt but he received the letter, this day I hoped to ſee him; pray do you go to the top of the tower, and if he ſhould be coming, beckon him with your handkerchief to make haſte. Away went Irene with a heavy heart; while Fatima, with a heavier one, went to meet Blue Beard; who, as ſoon as he ſaw her, cried out, 'Well Madam, how have you entertained yourſelf? don't you think there are ſights in the Caſtle worth looking at?' 'Yes replied Fatima, ſighing, 'there are indeed!'---'But why

ſigh, my love! ſays Blue Beard, 'I hope you have not broke the order I gave you; come, give me the keys.' Poor Fatima with an aching heart, put her hand into her pocket, and pulling out the keys, gave them to him with a trembling hand.

Blue Beard was afraid ſomething had happened by her trembling; he no ſooner ſaw the blood on the key of the chamber he forbid her to enter, than his countenance changed, and he roared out in a voice like thunder, 'Ah! wretch, I ſee what you have been at; you have ſeen my former wives, who have forfeited their lives by their curioſity, and you ſhall now go and lay among them.'

So saying he seized her by the hair of her head: when, falling on her knees, she besought him to spare her life; but he was a monster not to be moved. When she found he was determined to kill her, she begged him to grant her a little time to say her prayers. He bid her go, but not be long or he would fetch her.

Getting up into her chamber, she called for her sister, and asked her if she saw any thing. No, dear sister, said Irene, nothing but the dreary common and the sky. Are you most done? said Blue-Beard; yes, cried Fatima; when calling again to Irene, she said, sister, what do you see? Nothing, dear sister, but a flock of sheep.

Are you not a coming? ſaid Blue Beard, in a ſurlier voice than before; yes directly, ſaid Fatima; when calling to her ſiſter, ſhe aſked her if ſhe ſaw nothing? yes, cried Irene, I ſee a great cloud of duſt, but it is a great way off. If you don't come down, Blue Beard roared out, I will fetch you; coming, cried Fatima: when calling again to her ſiſter, ſhe aſked her what ſhe ſaw? I ſee, cried Irene, a number of horſemen riding full ſpeed towards the Caſtle: wave your handkerchief, dear ſiſter, that they may make more haſte, or I fear it will be all over with me.

At this inſtant entered Blue Beard, and ſeizing her hair, began dragging her towards the Blue

Chamber, while her ſhrieks were enough to pierce the heart of ſtone. He had not dragged her far, before he heard the ſound of feet on the ſtairs; and as tyrants are always cowards, he ſtopt to liſten.

He had not ſtopt long before Se-

lim, (who had forced into the Caſtle) following the cries of Fatima, ruſhed into the room, with his

ſword in hand. Villain, ſaid Blue Beard, drawing his ſcymater, what doſt thou here? Tyrant, cried Selim, to puniſh ſuch a monſter as thou art. They ſaid no more, but at it they went. Deſpair lent courage to Blue Beard; love to Selim; while poor Fatima ſat trembling on the floor. At length Selim prevailed: for running Blue Beard through the body, he laid him breathleſs on the floor.

He now went to Fatima, who was fainting, and taking her in his arms, carried her to the window to give her air.

In the mean time his brother had overcome the ſlaves, who were not ſorry to hear of Blue Beard's death.

Selim took poſſeſſion of the Caſtle, gave the ſlaves their liberty, and married Fatima. Selim's brother fell in love with and married Irene, and they all lived together happily.

CRUEL Blue Beard being dead
And thoſe loversin his ſtead,
Time goes merrily along,
Now a dance, and then a ſong :
For whenever true love's found,
Joy and pleaſure will abound.
By the poor around they're bleſt,
By the rich around careſt ;
Guilt may leave behind its ſtings,
Nought but comfort virtue brings.

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION
Gift of
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LOS ANGELES